

2002-2003 has been another busy year for carers and Carers Scotland with legislative change, changes in Ministers externally, and staff internally.

Legislation

The main highlight has been the ongoing implementation of the new **Community Care & Health (Scotland) Act 2002**

Policy guidance was produced on the new rights for carers that came into force on 1 September 2002.

The content of the guidance was encouraging. In the first instance, it was underpinned by the principle of carers as “key partners”. This sets the tone and direction for the implementation of the legislation and recognises as integral the contribution of carers. Other specific developments were viewed positively, including:

- **Its emphasis on the impact of caring on carers rather than previous local authority approach to assessment based on “regular and substantial” levels of caring.**
- **The introduction of key principles, including an explanation of the “ability to care”, importantly focused on the willingness and capacity of a carer to continue caring and not based on ability or competence.**
- **The inclusion of significant statements on charges for non-residential care services on the grounds that charges for services may have a negative impact on carers.**

Carers Scotland committee members and staff provided a comprehensive response, presenting positive feedback and a range of suggestions for improvement.

The final guidance (CCD2/2003) was distributed in April 2003 and can be found at www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd/ccd.asp or by contacting Carers Scotland.

Further “good practice” guidance will be produced in consultation with carers and practitioners from the NHS, social work services and the voluntary sector.

Also implemented from the Act was the first stage of the extension of direct payments on 1st June 2003. This legislates for local authorities to have a duty to offer direct payments to disabled people. Parents and carers of disabled children can also request a direct payment on behalf of their child.

The policy and practice guidance (CCD4/2003) can be found at www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd/ccd.asp or by contacting Carers Scotland.

Campaigns

- **Carers Rights Day 2002** supported by Carers UK produced a huge response from carers and welfare and benefits advice agencies committed to improving carers’ awareness and the take-up of benefits.
- **Energy for Caring** – the 2nd stage of the campaign followed on from the pilot initiative, in partnership with Scottish Gas, of putting a message on customer bills in a bid to encourage more carers to access support, advice and information. In this stage, over 700 voluntary organisations, citizens’ advice bureaux, community care forums, hospitals and health councils, social work departments and local authority “one-stop shops” were contacted with posters, further information and details of a dedicated helpline for carers to contact.
- **Carers’ Manifesto** - during the 2003 Scottish Parliament and local government elections, Carers Scotland and our partners distributed 20,000 copies of the Carers’ Manifesto. Alongside this, a range of campaigning material was also available on the Carersonline website. This gave us the opportunity to raise the profile of carers and the key issues brought up by members of respite, carers’ health, transport, isolation and access to information.

With huge thanks to all those involved in another successful year for Carers Scotland.

- **Carers Week, June 2003** was another successful campaign to raise awareness of carers. Across Scotland, locally organised events attracted support and interest from local authorities, health boards and other partners. Nationally, Carers Scotland joined forces with Crossroads Scotland; Contact a Family Scotland; Capability Scotland; and PRTC Scotland and organised an event for carers with speakers including carers, partner agencies and the new Deputy Minister for Health & Community Care, Tom McCabe, MSP.

Research

As ever, Carers Scotland's campaigning work was supported by research. Publications this year have included key pieces of research highlighting young carers.

"Young carers and education"

This report by Loughborough University draws on existing research on the subject of children under 16 with caring responsibilities. The report concludes that taking on the caring role can be a major barrier to a child's education. The report is only available as a pdf, which can be downloaded from the Carersonline website at www.carersonline.org.uk or by contacting Carers Scotland.

"Participation for change: lessons on effective engagement and influence in the policy process from the experiences of carers"

We are delighted to report that the Scottish Executive have agreed to fund the costs of a 9 month research project (running from July 2003) looking at carer involvement in policy and legislative change. The project will aim to capture the experience of carers, carer organisations and policy makers in recent policy and legislative developments. It will aim to use that analysis and evidence to inform practical recommendations and learning for developing consultative and involvement methodologies in the future that will be of value to the Executive and other external groups, not just carers.

Carers Outcomes Project

Carers Scotland and other partners have been involved in this research project, commissioned by the Scottish Executive. The research was carried out to inform the development of indicators to qualitatively measure indicators and reporting mechanisms for statutory authorities to record and monitor local outcomes for carers from local

services funded through Carers' Strategy. The objectives are to develop a framework of indicators that can be integrated into the new Joint Performance Information and Assessment Framework that has been introduced to monitor the implementation of Joint Future. The aim will be to introduce these new indicators from April 2004, following further consultation and development with carers over the next few months.

Carers Scotland's Services

Carers Online - www.carersonline.org.uk - the development of this website, aimed at being a resource for carers, professional advisers and service providers, continues. Further redevelopment of the site has been undertaken and the "new look" site should be up and running soon.

Information Services for carers and service providers, funded through the Community Fund, continue. The service offers a range of information including an enquiry service for carers and service providers, regular email bulletins on new developments in policy and practice and a range of factsheets, newsletters and information leaflets. Over the year, Carers Scotland received more than 1500 enquiries from carers and statutory and voluntary organisations. In addition to this, Carersline advisors responded to over 1,000 enquiries from carers and workers in Scotland.

Training and Development - 2002 was a very busy year for the Training Unit with a total of 180 delegates attending our courses. Through evaluation and consultation, the Unit has revamped its 2003 course programme and now offers a range of new options to build from a menu of course options, building knowledge and skills to suit an individual's job role.

Membership and Carers Scotland Committee

The membership of Carers Scotland has continued to support the organisation and to be an active part of our lobbying, campaigns and research work.

As a carer-led organisation, our members are our most important asset, and one of the main ways they make their contribution is through the Scotland Committee. Many of our committee members are involved at local and national level in improving services for cared-for people, and

increasing the role of carers as key partners in care. Their activities have included consultations with the Scottish Social Services Council, and ongoing consultation with the Scottish Executive and other national bodies.

In 2002, Scotland Committee members were:

Isobel Allan
Isobel Anderson, Vice-Chair
Ursula Corker, Chair
Brenda Emmerson
Janet Gutteridge
Wendy Laird
Ena Murray
Gordon Thomas
Fiona Thomson
Jacqueline Walsh
Jan Wells
Jack Ryan (Crossroads Scotland); Dr Pauline Banks (Strathclyde Centre for Disability Research, Glasgow) and Jim Needham (Scottish Gas) are co-opted members.

Alliances and Networks

Alliances and networks are an important feature of the work of Carers Scotland.

Scottish Carers Alliance

In 2002-2003, Carers Scotland continued to support the development of the Scottish Carers Alliance. The Alliance brings together a range of national carers, disability and children's organisations to increase awareness of carers as key partners and to add other voices to campaigns and change to support carers.

Throughout 2002, with the support of Carers Scotland, the Alliance delivered a successful seminar programme, alongside a conference addressing the role of respite/short breaks in the future development of community care services in March 2003.

The Alliance participated in a range of forums to encourage the inclusion of carers' perspectives in policy making. These included the Involving People Network, Voluntary Health Scotland, the Coalition of Carers in Scotland and the Cross-Party Group on Children and Young People.

Joint Futures for Carers

Joint Futures for Carers is a successful partnership project between Carers Scotland and the Coalition of Carers in Scotland, funded by the Scottish

Executive. The project aims to improve the level of involvement of carers in local community care planning and to ensure that as key partners in the provision of care, carers' involvement is meaningful and effective.

The project is now in its second phase and a pilot training programme aimed at developing skills among local carer groups and representatives from statutory service planning and providing agencies in local government and the NHS was rolled out from Spring 2003.

The project has also published a Mapping Exercise of Scottish Executive and Scottish Parliament legislation, policy and delivery programmes in community care and public involvement. The report gathers into one document some of the key legislative and policy developments over the last few years that are relevant to carers, aiming to support their interventions with planners and decision-makers at local and national level.

Staff Team Changes

In 2002-2003 there have been changes in the staff line up at Carers Scotland.

- **Jacqui Taylor**, Training & Development Manager – joined September 2002
- **Helen Chambers**, Policy and Parliamentary Affairs Manager – left February 2003
- **Eilidh Whiteford**, Scottish Carers Alliance Coordinator – left April 2003
- **Angela O'Hagan**, Director – left April 2003
- **Pat Begley**, Director – joined August 2003.
- **Victoria Murray**, Scottish Carers Alliance Coordinator – joining September 2003.

Carers Scotland, August 2003.

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